



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

at the present day. They knew the worth of moral purity, of filial obedience, of humility in all stations, of the right use of wealth, of kindness especially to the poor ; but, like men of later generations, they knew and preached more than they practised.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

BY PROF. W. J. BEECHER, D. D.,

Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N. Y.

DECEMBER 13. THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR. Isa. LIII., 1-12.

DECEMBER 20. THE GRACIOUS INVITATION. Isa. LV., 1-11.

The last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah form a continuous literary work. This work may perhaps be best described as a didactic poem, a series of sermons in rhythm, full of feeling and poetic fire, though lacking the progressive action which would be essential in an epic or in a drama. The regular rhythm of the poem is stately, occasionally relieved by the insertion of brief lyric pieces, with an entirely different movement. See, for example, Isa. XLII., 10-12.

The poem has three main divisions, each of them containing three subdivisions, each of which consists of three parts. These twenty-seven parts are quite commonly called cantos, in the lack of a better term, by the scholars who have written on the book of Isaiah. The twenty-seven cantos differ somewhat in their limits from the twenty-seven chapters, as the latter are now divided.

Many commentators hold that the poem was written from the point of view of Israel in Babylon, just at the beginning of the conquests of Cyrus. Some of these hold that this point of view was adopted predictively, by inspiration, and others, that the book was written in the time of Cyrus. With all due deference to men wiser than myself, I cannot accept this opinion. Some parts of the work certainly refer to the period in question, Isa. XLIV., 24-28, and the opening verses of the next chapter, for example. But this is only an occasional mode of representation ; the usual mode contemplates Israel as a political power, residing in Jerusalem and the cities of Judah.

These twenty-seven cantos are very much more used in the New Testament than is any other continuous portion of the Old Testament of equal length. Some other sections, the middle chapters of Genesis, for example, or a selected tract of the Psalms, might rival it in the number of citations, but the citations from these chapters of Isaiah are longer and fuller, and the imagery of Isaiah is carried over into the New Testament, to an extent altogether without parallel in these other writings. The name of Isaiah, as a concordance shows, is ten times mentioned in the New Testament, in connection with these twenty-seven chapters ; in six of these instances, the words cited are attributed, verbally, at least, to the person Isaiah ; and in the other four, to the book of Isaiah.

There is no historical testimony, either in the Bible or out of it, to the existence of any great prophet named Isaiah, except the one who lived in the days of Hezekiah. Scholars who disbelieve in the reality of miraculous prediction, of course hold that the poem we are now considering was not written by this Isaiah,

but by some author who lived as late as the reign of Cyrus the Persian. The same view is taken by some authors who do not deny the possibility of inspired prediction. According to their differences of view, different men hold either that the New Testament writers and their contemporaries were mistaken in attributing this work to Isaiah, or that the Isaiah to whom they attribute it was a second prophet of that name, living in the days of Cyrus or later, or that, when they say that Isaiah uttered certain words, they mean no more than that the words were to be found in the book of that name. It is a supposable theory, for example, that the present book of Isaiah is a collection of productions of different men, written in different centuries, and that the collector gave to his work the name of Isaiah, because the productions of that prophet predominated in his collection. As a section of the same theory, it is certainly imaginable that the second half of the book may be a collection of older poems, arranged by a subsequent hand into a single symmetrical poem.

These things, I say, are supposable, and imaginable. If they could be proved to be true, I do not see that they would necessarily conflict with any proposition dear to intelligent orthodoxy. Views of this sort are actually held by men who are so thoroughly competent and so thoroughly reverent, that we have no right to treat them with either contempt or bitterness. But while I wish to emphasize all this, the evidence in the case yet seems to me to preponderate immensely in favor of the conclusion that the twenty-seven cantos are the literary work of the Isaiah who lived in Hezekiah's time. For the discussion of the subject, see the introductions to Isaiah in the various commentaries, works on Biblical Introduction, and religious and other encyclopædias. Especially valuable are the articles published by the Rev. W. H. Cobb, in four numbers of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, in 1881 and 1882.

According to the division adopted by Prof. Franz Delitzsch, the first of the two Sunday School Lessons named above, with the last three verses of the preceding chapter, constitutes the fourteenth of the twenty-seven cantos of the poem. The subject is the contrasted exaltation and humiliation of the Servant of Jehovah, who is named in the first sentence in the canto. What I suppose to be the best received Jewish interpretation of the passage insists that the Servant, as here mentioned, is Israel; and points to the fact that the history of Israel is that of a people who have always been both suffering worse calamities, and achieving more magnificent successes, than any other people; and whose calamities have been, to a very remarkable extent, overruled to the benefit of the nations of the earth. We Christians are more or less in the habit of denying this interpretation; but the New Testament writers never deny it. Instead of denying it, they add to it the great truth that, in the person of him whom they present as preeminently the Messiah and the Servant, who came, humanly, out of Israel, and whose history is generically a part of the history of Israel, these utterances concerning Israel are fulfilled in an infinitely larger, grander, exacter sense, than in all the rest of the history of Israel combined. According to Isaiah and Paul, the Servant is not Israel as distinguished from the personal Christ, nor the personal Christ as distinguished from Israel, but the one as including the other. It is logically possible to use the term Christ as including, besides the person of the Redeemer, the whole work of redemption in all the ages, and therefore that part of the work of redemption which was wrought through the people of Israel; and the term is actually so used in the New Testament, Eph. i., 10, for example.

Again, it is logically possible so to use the term Israel as to include in it all the historical consequences which followed from Israel as an antecedent, and among these, both the Christian religion and the person of its Christ; and the biblical writers actually use the term thus, in a large proportion of the Messianic prophecies and of the apostolic comment thereon.

This canto sets forth a great truth concerning the divine government. This truth is, not that the innocent are ever punished for the guilty, in the proper sense of the term punishment, but that the innocent suffer for the guilty, and that God uses this state of things to bring about the most beneficent results; among other results, often, the repentance and the justification of the guilty. It is very likely true of the Israelitish people that, apart from the question of their own sins, they have suffered more for the sins of others, and with more beneficent effects to themselves and others, than any other people whose history we can trace. But I cannot find in considerations like these more than a subordinate and illustrative part of the meaning of the prophecy before us. Its full meaning can be realized in nothing less than the truly atoning death of the Savior of mankind.

The second of the above designated Sunday School Lessons constitutes, according to Delitzsch, the sixteen of the twenty-seven cantos. It is one of the shortest, and in a literary point of view, one of the simplest and finest of them all. It was probably understood by those who first heard it, as a call to repentance and to the sharing of spiritual blessings, enforced by the doctrine that God had made a covenant with Abraham and with David, in virtue of which Israel was God's Servant, his chosen agent for blessing all the nations of the earth. Ethically, therefore, the gracious invitation was precisely the same to them as it is to us. If the matter referred to in the chapter is some local or political salvation, still the local affair is treated of by applying to it the general principles on which God deals with men; and it is no perversion of Scripture to apply these principles directly to the cases which arise in our own experience; provided, of course, we make the application correctly. The unlearned man, who understands these verses in precisely the same meaning which the words would have in the mouth of a modern revival preacher, is much nearer the truth than the critical scholar, if the latter dessicates them into mere statements concerning a certain crisis in Israelitish politics. The prophet exhorts the people whom he addresses collectively, and each individual of them, to accept Jehovah, because all things else, without Him, are unsatisfying. The Christian preacher makes the same exhortation, and gives the same reason. The prophet bases his exhortation on whatever men then knew, or looked forward to, of the Messianic covenant made with Abraham, Israel and David. The Christian teacher bases his exhortation on whatever men now know or look forward to, of the same covenant; for we all claim, with Paul, that ours is a new covenant only in the sense of being a larger unfolding of the old covenant.

JAN. 3, 1886. JOSIAH AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW. 2 Kgs. XXII., 1-13.

Hezekiah, king of Judah, was succeeded by Manasseh. During his long reign, Sennacherib, Esar-Haddon, and Assur-bani-pal (the Sardanapalus of the Greek historians) were kings in Assyria. Their records are known quite in full, and abound in matters indirectly throwing light upon the Bible history; but we must resist the temptation to cite them. The Sardanapalus of the Assyrian records is

as unlike as possible to the Sardanapalus of the Greek historians; being an energetic prince and a great conqueror, instead of an effeminate person. After a long reign, Manasseh was succeeded by Aman, and he, after two years, by Josiah, the king in whose reign the incidents of the lesson took place. At some time during the reign of Josiah, the long series of conquests which the Assyrian kings claim to have made over Babylon culminated in the complete supremacy of Babylon, and the final overthrow of Assyria. The Mesopotamian records of this event are meagre, the Greek records hardly trustworthy, and the Hebrew records mainly confined to the fact that Zephaniah, who says that he prophesied in the days of Josiah, was prophesying against Nineveh.

We turn from further notice of the historical setting of the lesson. In the current critical discussions, two questions concerning the lesson are of very marked importance: First, what was the book that Hilkiah found? and secondly, how did he happen to find it?

It seems to me unaccountable that the men who have answered the first of these questions have paid so little attention to the fact that, both in Kings and Chronicles, the records carefully distinguish, verbally, between the book that was found, and the book which was read, entire, before the people. Nearly every author assumes that these two were identical, and argues his opinions from this assumption. But the book that was found is called "the book of the Law;" in one instance, "the book of the law of Jehovah by the hand of Moses," 2 Chron. xxxiv., 14, 15; 2 Kgs. xxii., 8, 11. It is said in Kings that Shaphan read it, that Shaphan read it before the king, that the king read it (verses 8, 10, 16). The parallel statements in Chronicles are that Shaphan read in it before the king, and that the book (or perhaps the curses written in the book) was read before the king, verses 18, 24. In none of these private readings is there a syllable to indicate whether the reading occupied one sitting or many, or whether the whole book was read, or only a part of it. Later, the king read publicly "all the words of the book of the covenant, which was found in the house of the Lord," 2 Kgs. xxiii., 2; 2 Chron. xxxiv., 30. From the words "which was found in the house of the Lord" it is probably fair to infer that this book of the covenant was identical, either wholly or in part, with the book of the law found there. From its being called by a different name, and from the fact that the statements made concerning it are different, it is fair to infer that the identity may have been only partial, or, in other words, that the book of the covenant, the whole of which was read to the people, was some defined section of the book of the law. We cannot absolutely prove this, indeed; but it is likely to be true, and no one can disprove it.

The traditional opinion seems to be that the book of the law found in the temple was the Pentateuch; and there is certainly nothing inconsistent with this in the account. We have just seen that there is no force in the objection that the Pentateuch is too long to be read at a sitting, for the account does not intimate that the book of the law, as distinguished from the book of the covenant, was thus read, either publicly or privately. On the other hand, however, it is evident from verses 11-20, that the king read the law in Deuteronomy, and there is no trace in the narrative of his having read any other part of the Pentateuch. So far as any testimony positively given in the narrative is concerned, his book of the law might have been merely this section of the Mosaic writings. But still again, the term "the book of the law," or even the term "the book of the law by the

hand of Moses," is not necessarily limited to the Pentateuchal writings. The term "the book of the law" would appropriately include any other writings authoritatively given through prophets, as well as those given through Moses. In the New Testament, the law sometimes means the Pentateuch, and sometimes the whole Old Testament. It is both unproveable and improbable that there was ever a period in Israelitish literature, when a similar variation of usage was inadmissible. In Ezra, the phrase "the book of Moses" is so used, apparently, as to include certain sections of the Book of Chronicles—a book which then probably existed only in sections.* Joshua, as well as Moses, wrote in the book of the law. There is historical testimony to the fact that prophetic writings were not only produced, but were gathered into collections, in the days of Samuel and David, and again in the days of Isaiah. We are informed that Josiah actually possessed and used authoritative sacred writings of David and Solomon, and perhaps others, 2 Chron. xxxv., 4, 15, 18. 2 Kgs. xxiii., 15, 17, 18. If the book found in the temple was larger than the people's code in Deuteronomy, it seems more probable that it contained all the prophetic Torah-writings which had been collected and recognized, up to the time of "the men of Hezekiah king of Judah" (see Prov. xxv., 1), than that it consisted of Mosaic writings only.

Whether this book was the Pentateuch, or only a part of the Pentateuch, or included other writings as well as those of Moses, there is no intimation that this was the only copy then existing. The idea that there was no other copy anywhere, and that the pious young king had never till then accurately known the contents of the law, is so picturesque, so gratifying to our love of the wonderful, that no one should be surprised at its having come to be a part of the common interpretation of the narrative. But the records nowhere either assert or imply that this was the only copy; and the probabilities are certainly all the other way. The authors both of Kings and of Chronicles held that the book of the law had been in use from the beginning of the times of which they treat, that is from the reign of David; and that during all this time, Israel was a literary people. They both give us to understand that Josiah was already prosecuting the reforms called for by the book of the law, before Hilkiah found the book in the temple. No reader doubts that the authors intended to convey the impression that the copy found in the temple was a special copy of some sort; supposably the original copy, or supposably the official royal copy, or something of the sort. The fact of its being a special and remarkable copy will account for all the interest taken in it, and thus for all the renewed zeal occasioned by it, even if common copies of the same book were then plentiful in Jerusalem and elsewhere. The assertion that the copy found was the only copy in existence is, therefore, one that must not be taken for granted. It needs proving, and no proof of it can be found.

The traditional opinion as to how the book happened to be found in the temple is, of course, that it had been hidden away during the persecutions of Manasseh, and the knowledge of its hiding place lost. The contrary opinion held by many is that the book had just been written in Josiah's time, and that the finding of it in the temple was part of a plan arranged for calling the attention of the king to it. Few of the intelligent supporters of this theory would claim that it

* In Ezra vi., 8, we are told that the setting of the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses is written in the book of Moses. But these matters are not mentioned at all in the Pentateuch, and are treated in detail, with the use of the same technical terms used in this statement in Ezra, in 1 Chron. xxiii. and xxiv.

agrees with the account given, either in Kings or in Chronicles; they would only claim that this must be the underlying fact, which the authors of the historical books which the authors have somewhat inaccurately transmitted. Their reasons for this claim are drawn partly from the narratives themselves, and partly from external sources. The reasons from external sources, we cannot now examine. They do not seem to me to justify the conclusions just mentioned. Their reasons from the narratives themselves are really very largely based, not on the narratives, but on the traditional interpretation which we have considered above. The men who hold to the traditional interpretation of course deny these conclusions drawn from it. But it seems to me in this, as in many other instances, that to correct the misapprehensions that have been incorporated into the traditional view is to remove the fulcrum from under the lever of the men who are working to overthrow that view.

STUDIES IN ARCHÆOLOGY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

BY JUSTIN A. SMITH, D. D.,

Editor of *The Standard*, Chicago.

XII.

THE IDEA OF EVIL, AS TO ITS NATURE.

It is but stating a very obvious truth to say that evil presents itself to men, always and necessarily, under two aspects,—either as that which we term physical, or that which we term moral. The former, of course, will include all that in nature which indicates disorder, or that affects unfavorably the welfare of sentient beings, and the latter, that which, in a higher sphere of things, is evil because it is wrong. That the relations of these two should, in apprehension and in speculation, be confused, is noways surprising, especially in those cases where men confront such great problems of the universe with no help from revelation. We perhaps ought rather to be surprised that, in a world where the physical aspects of evil so much force themselves on the attention of men, its moral aspects should retain a hold so firm and so enduring. The fact may testify to the undying nature of that principle which God has given to the human soul as a higher law in man's own being, and a witness to the being and nature of God himself.

INSTINCT AND SPECULATION.

It is more in the way men have dealt with this principle, than in the presence or absence of the principle, that differences in races and in ages of mankind are seen. Traces of it—rather we may say distinct manifestations of it—appear even in savage races. Take the case of the Basutos, among whom, according to Casalis, cited by Pressensé “the idea of moral evil is conveyed by such expressions as ugliness, debt, deficiency, powerlessness;” by whom “theft, adultery, and lying, are unsparingly denounced;” and in many of whose proverbs a moral insight appears which one would not expect to find in a savage race. “Human blood,” they say, “is heavy, and will not let him flee on whose hands it is.” “If a man be secretly killed, the straw of the field will tell it.” “The thief catcheth himself.” “Cunning devours its master.” Undoubtedly, the idea of moral evil, among such races, never gets beyond what is elementary to it, or perhaps we may